

VIRGINIA CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION



September 2020 | Volume 30 | Issue 1

The Virginia Conservation Association (VCA) promotes the care and preservation of cultural materials. The VCA offers education and training for those involved in conservation and provides a forum for discussion of pertinent issues and new developments in the field.

The VCA is open to anyone with an interest in the care and preservation of art and historic artifacts.

virginiaconservationassociation.org

Next Member's Meeting

September 17, 2020
6:00pm

Submission Deadline for
the November Newsletter

October 21, 2020

Letter from the President

The VCA Board welcomes you all to the beginning of a new VCA year! We are working to create activities that will be fun, informative, and will allow for the safety considerations that continue to be a part of our everyday life. We are planning a virtual social event so that everyone has a chance to see each other and catch up with what everyone has been up to. Also, read the newsletter to find an opportunity to sign up for a Helping Hands activity that is COVID-19 safe, child-friendly, and outdoors!



Kate Ridgway, VCA President

These have also become financially taxing times for many people. With this in mind, the Board would like to remind students that we have two \$250 scholarships to help with an educational activity. Seeing as a lot of learning opportunities have moved online, this means that these scholarships might be even more useful! Email education.vaconservation@gmail.com for more information or to submit an application.

We hope that you and yours are all faring well and are finding ways to stay engaged at work and upbeat on a daily basis. These are difficult times and the VCA is here to provide you with something to look forward to. Stay safe everyone!

Upcoming VCA Meeting September 17, 2020

To kick off this year's VCA bimonthly meetings, Gretchen Guidess, Conservator of Textiles at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, will be presenting a collaborative project she executed with Leroy Graves, Senior Conservator of Upholstery (see below for details). Her presentation was warmly welcomed at this year's AIC Annual Meeting and she has generously agreed to present for those who were unable to attend the meeting this year. The meeting and presentation will take place online on September 17th at 6:00pm. To make VCA meetings more interactive, this September's online meeting will take place on Zoom. Before the meeting, visit [Zoom.us](https://zoom.us), create a free account, and install the app. The VCA will send out a meeting link to all members in advance of the meeting date. Click on the meeting link in the email to join the meeting!

VCA Member's Meeting

Date: **Thursday, September 17**

Time: **6:00pm**

Look for an email with a
Zoom link to attend!



Collaborative Reconstruction: Exhibiting a Loose Cover for an Easy Chair

By Leroy Graves & Gretchen Guidess

Conservators at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation were faced with a rare treat; how to display an 1820s loose cover for an easy chair. Loose covers were made to fit furnishings throughout the 18th and 19th centuries and even today to protect expensive show covers and to provide a detachable and launderable seating cover. Often easy chair forms contained a chamber pot accessible once the cover was pulled aside. The cover was found amongst a rich cache of family heirlooms in North Carolina, an area of the Southeast studied by the Foundation. The cover is constructed from a blue copper plate printed cotton depicting several agrarian vignettes of men, women, and children engaged in various activities: harvesting wheat, bringing in the hay, hunting, traveling by coach, cooking and visiting out of doors, and what may be men active in road maintenance. Major seams are turned to the outside and covered with undyed twill tape. Although the cover survived, the chair for which it was constructed for did not. Numerous easy chairs demonstrate the longevity of chair frames preserved in collections but few extant examples of the loose covers that were made to fit them endure. The private owners generously made this rare surviving cover available for study and display. In preparation for its exhibition in *Printed Fashions: Textiles for Clothing and Home* at the DeWitt Wallace Decorative Arts Museum, an easy chair mount was made to display the cover. Taking from a range of approaches used in upholstery conservation Graves combined them with rare earth magnets to produce a mount that reconstructed the size and appearance of the easy chair. Guidess treated the most compromised areas of the cover with custom-dyed supporting fabrics and sheer overlays. Close collaboration with the wooden artifact, upholstery, and textile conservators alongside talented volunteer furniture makers produced a display that made the cover intelligible and interpretable. To dress the cover onto its display mount it was assembled inside the cover, piece by piece, with the aid of many hands.



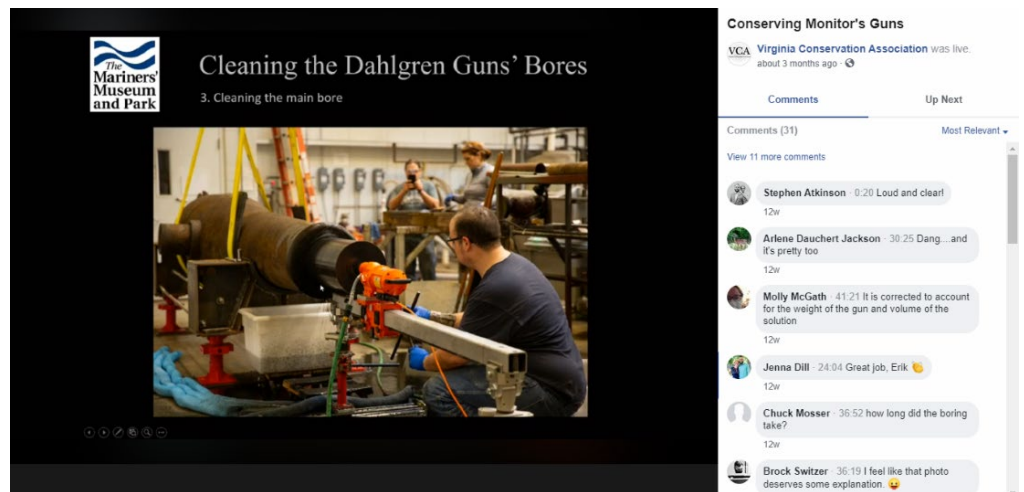
1820's easy chair cover displayed over a custom mount

Image: The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

VCA Meeting Summary May 14, 2020

Like so many events this year, VCA's final meeting of the 2019-2020 year went virtual! During a live event on the VCA Facebook page, Erik Farrell, archaeological conservator at the Mariners' Museum, shared his talk titled *Conserving USS Monitor's XI-Inch Dahlgren Shell Guns*.

The talk provided a detailed overview of the research that went into designing a unique system formulated to meet the goals of the Monitor project.



Screenshot from the May virtual meeting. Participants commented and asked questions throughout the presentation in the comment function.

When the turret from USS Monitor (1862) was archaeologically recovered in 2002, it contained the ship's primary armament: two XI-Inch Dahlgren Shell Guns. These guns are the largest caliber smoothbore, cast iron artillery ever recovered from a marine archaeological site, and as a result they represented a particular engineering challenge to clean. This involved the modification of a prior gun mount design, creation of a new drill mount design, and refinement of the methods used to establish alignment of the cleaning tool and gun bore. Additionally, a new set of tools and methods was created to remove concretion from the hemispheroidal, Gomer-type powder chamber. Erik's talk described the reasoning behind the decision to create a new methodology, details the equipment designs and construction, and provided a case study for its operation.

Erik's presentation was recorded and is available on the VCA Facebook page!

VCA Tips Session Call for Presenters

Hello VCA! As we look towards planning future VCA member meetings, we would like to plan an online VCA Conservation Tips Session. Similar to AIC Tips Sessions or STASHc Flash Presentations, presenters will share treatment tips, creative solutions for storage, economical solutions, and more.

This is where you come in! If you feel you have a unique conservation trick that might be useful to others, we would love to hear from you. Presentations will be informal and only 5-10 minutes each. If you would like to participate please contact the Programs Co-chairs at programs.vaconservation@gmail.com

Outreach Committee Update

We are excited to announce that we will be having our Helping Hands program this month with social distancing! On Saturday, September 26 the VCA will be lending a helping hand to Historic Evergreen Cemetery! As an opportunity to help a local organization, while social distancing, we will be helping to clean up a historic African American cemetery by cleaning headstones and removing vegetation. Lunch will be provided by the VCA. Work gloves, face masks, and hand sanitizer will be available, however, volunteers are encouraged to bring their own. All volunteers will have to sign a waiver and children 6+ are welcome to accompany their parents. The deadline to register is Wednesday Sept. 16th so that we plan ahead for social distancing and order lunch. Because this event is limited to 15 people in order to allow for social distancing, other dates can be scheduled if needed to accommodate more people.

To learn more about Historic Evergreen Cemetery visit:

<https://enrichmond.org/evergreen-cemetery/>

Please read the volunteer guidelines below and register at:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10cod4cafaa2ca5f4c61-helping>

Helping Hands at Historic Evergreen Cemetery

Date: **Saturday, September 26**

Time: **9:00 – 12:00**

Deadline to register **Wednesday, September 16**



Image courtesy of Chelsea Blake

Contact Chelsea Blake with questions

outreach.vaconservation@gmail.com

Volunteer Guidelines for Enrichmond Foundation

You may NOT volunteer if you have:

- Experienced COVID-19 related symptoms in the last 14 days (i.e. cough, fever, or any respiratory illness)
- Been near someone who is sick, or if you or anyone in your household have been in close contact with anyone who is confirmed to have COVID-19.
- Traveled to any foreign country, traveled by cruise, or been in contact with someone who has traveled, in the last 14 days.
- Been to an event with more than 50 people within the last 14 days

PPE (Personal Protection Equipment):

- MASKS MUST BE WORN AT ALL TIMES WHILE VOLUNTEERING.
- Volunteers and all Staff will wear proper PPE, which is gloves and MASKS, at all times.
- Discard any Enrichmond issued PPE into bins marked 'Dirty PPE' at the end of your volunteer shift for proper disposal.
- Used tools will be wiped down after use with on-site cleaners.

Hand washing:

- The onsite work area has 2 restrooms and a hand washing station. (Restrooms are sanitized daily)
- If soap and water are not readily available, use hand sanitizer. Each onsite work area has sanitizer stations and there is a station located near the Tool Container and Porta-Potty.

Other Sanitation Guidelines:

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your cough and sneezes with your elbow or tissue.
- Clean any used spaces thoroughly before and after use.
- Maintain a social distance of 6 feet apart when possible.

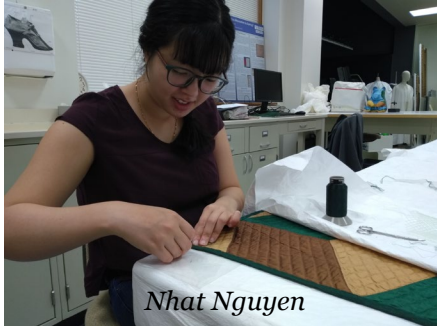
Volunteers will be sent home:

- If they do not adhere to these protocols.
- If they have not signed up online for the shift that day.
- Have a temperature of 100.4 & above. We will take temperatures at the start of each shift with a No Touch Thermometer.

ECPN Regional Liaison Update

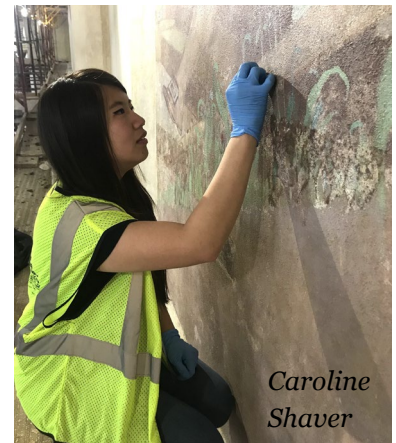
Nhat Nguyen and Caroline Shaver

The Emerging Professionals Conservation Network (ECPN) is a group within AIC that provides support for individuals transitioning from pre-program to graduate school to permanent positions. Nationwide, the ECPN is providing support and building a list of resources for graduate school applications and early career development.



Nhat Nguyen is one of the new ECPN co-liaisons for the Williamsburg/Virginia area. She is currently a pre-program intern at Colonial Williamsburg in the Textile and Archeology conservation labs. Nhat grew up in Portland, Oregon and started her pre-program working with a private paintings conservator before interning at the Textile Museum for a summer. Now that she is on the East Coast, she is excited to learn more about American history while here in Virginia.

Caroline Shaver is the other new ECPN co-liaison for the Williamsburg/Virginia area and is also the new co-programs chair for the VCA. She is a pre-program intern in the Wooden Artifact conservation lab at Colonial Williamsburg. Previously Caroline interned at the Cincinnati Art Museum, with John Canning Co., and in various private studios. She is looking forward to connecting conservators in the area as part of the ECPN and VCA.



This year Nhat and Caroline are planning events for emerging conservators to connect online in ways that are safe and healthy. The first Zoom meet-and-greet will be Wednesday, September 23rd at 6:30pm. This fall's main event will be an online "book club" with conservation related articles! If you are interested in joining the Williamsburg/Virginia area ECPN group, please contact williamsburg.ecpn.liaison@gmail.com for more information.



Nhat and Caroline assisted with the gilding treatment of an 18th century chandelier carried out in front of the public at the Art Museums of Colonial Williamsburg in 2019.

Visit these websites to learn more about ECPN!

<https://www.culturalheritage.org/membership/groups-and-networks/emerging-conservation-professionals-network>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/419707523031/>

ECPN Meet-and-Greet

Date: **Wednesday, September 23**

Time: **6:30 pm**

Email williamsburg.ecpn.liaison@gmail.com to RSVP for this event!

The VCA at AIC

This year's annual American Institute for Conservation (AIC) meeting has been dramatically different than previous years. The meeting, scheduled for May 19-23 in Salt Lake City, Utah, was moved to a virtual format amid Coronavirus concerns. General and specialty group sessions have been held on weekday afternoons in two-hour increments over the course of the summer. While this new format has not been without its challenges, spreading the presentations out over many weeks has eliminated the need for attendees to choose between concurrent sessions. The presentations are recorded and available to all registered attendees through the end of the year, providing a great opportunity to catch up on sessions or revisit particularly interesting or relevant talks.

The VCA membership has been well represented in this year's AIC program. Members gave virtual talks, presented during the Poster Session, and participated in panel discussions. See below for member presentations!



Will Hoffman

The Mariners' Museum



An Uplifting Story: Re-Supporting the Gun Turret of USS Monitor

**Annika Blake-Howard
Gretchen Guidess**

The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

Biohazard at the Palace:

Collaborative Response in Collection Care for Historic Interiors

Annika Blake-Howard and Gretchen Guidess

Colonial Williamsburg



Biohazard at the Palace: Collaborative Response in Collection Care for Historic Interiors

**Laurie King
Lesley Haines
Molly McGath,
Ph.D.**

The Mariners' Museum

Cleaning and Treatment

Chemical Cleaning

- Iron and copper stain removal via a bath of 2% (w/v) dibasic ammonium citrate in DI H₂O
- Bath lasted 24 hours, followed by a 24-48 hour rinse in DI H₂O
- Multiple baths necessary for some objects, depending on severity of staining

Mechanical Cleaning

- Bamboo sticks and brushes
- Cleaning with Parkell Turbo SENSOR™ Ultrasonic Scalier: water pressure and ultrasonic power were altered based on the stability of the object to remove debris, staining, and corrosion
- Use of an ultrasonic bath is not recommended; delamination of layers and disintegration of some rubbers were observed when tested

Laurie King surface cleaning rubber gasket using with Parkell TurboSENSOR™ Ultrasonic Scalier. Image Credit: Location: Governor of Daily Press. King | July 2020 | Newport News, VA

A Sticky Situation: Conservation of Historical Waterlogged Rubber (poster)

**Leroy Graves
Gretchen Guidess**

The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

**Collaborative reconstruction:
Exhibiting a loose cover for an easy chair**

Leroy Graves, Senior Conservator of Upholstery
Gretchen Guidess, Conservator of Textiles

Collaborative Reconstruction: Exhibiting a Loose Cover for an Easy Chair

**Molly McGath,
Ph.D.
Lesley Haines
Laurie King
Hannah Fleming**

The Mariners' Museum



Polymeric Treasure: Evaluating the Composition of Civil War Era Rubber Objects from USS Monitor

When Rubber Hits the Road: A Panel Discussion about Current Standards for Plastics as Storage Materials

Panelists:
Paige Schmidt
Molly McGath,
Ph.D.
Gina Watkinson
Kate Wight Tyler
Thea Van Oosten
Catherine Stephens

Opportunities and Resources

AIC's New Career Center

AIC has just recently launched a new Career Center that includes job postings in the cultural heritage sector. Other features include free resume review and links to career resources and events.

Visit <https://careers.culturalheritage.org/>

AIC Annual Meeting Call for Papers

AIC's 49th Annual Meeting will be held in Jacksonville, Florida May 13-15, 2021. The meeting will be held jointly with the Society for Preservation of Natural History Collections (SPNHC). The meeting theme *Transform* aims to explore how we can transform our field, and how our work can transform the world. The call for papers is now open, the deadline for submissions is **September 20, 2020**.

<https://www.culturalheritage.org/events/annual-meeting/future-meetings/meeting-2021>

ICON Coronavirus Guidance

The Institute of Conservation (ICON) has compiled resources for collections care, guidance on returning to work safely in historic buildings and sites, and a library of links and resources for cultural heritage professionals. These resources are available to everyone, membership is not required to access content.

Visit <https://icon.org.uk/resources/coronavirus-guidance>

The REALM Project

The Reopening Archives, Libraries, and Museums (REALM) Research Project has been conducting research on how long COVID-19 survives on materials that are prevalent in libraries, archives, and museums. A summary of their work and test results, literature reviews, and example reopening plans can be found online.

<https://www.webjunction.org/explore-topics/COVID-19-research-project.html>

The VCA Student Scholarship

The VCA offers a scholarship to our student members to assist with costs associated with furthering education in the field. Two annual scholarships of \$250 each are available to be used towards fees for classes, conferences, or other professional development opportunities. Applications are accepted throughout the year and will be evaluated by the VCA Board during the December and April meetings. Successful applicants will be notified within one week of the Board meeting, and preseted with a check within the following 30 days. Receipts will be required write a VCA newsletter article summarizing their experience.

Applications must include a one-page proposal for use of funds that specifies how the scholarship will assist in the pursuit of a career in conservation or a directly related field. To apply, email our Education Committee Co-Chairs or mail paper applications to the VCA, P.O. Box 7023, Richmond, VA 23221

VCA Membership Renewal

Membership renewal is upon us for the 2020-2021 year! Please renew your Membership by **October 15** to be eligible for member benefits and to ensure your inclusion in the Directory. You can renew online by visiting the link below. Complete the application form and submit it before adding the membership to your card and making your payment.

<https://virginiaconservationassociation.org/members>

As requested last year, PLEASE FILL OUT THE FORM IN ITS ENTIRETY. The VCA Services Directory will be updated to reflect any conservators and/or preservation specialists who want to be searchable through the VCA website for private work (as opposed to the general membership online directory). Please check the box in the last question on the form only if you want to be searchable for Private Practice.

You can also print the application at the end of the newsletter and submit payment via mail to:

The Virginia Conservation Association
PO Box 7023
Richmond, VA 23221

VCA AUGUST BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Virtual Board Meeting - August 10, 2020

ATTENDEES

Kate Ridgway, Tina Gessler, Keri Ragland, Elizabeth Robson, Chelsea Blake, Laurie King, Caroline Shaver, Jackie Peterson-Grace, Christy Altland

Call to Order: President Kate Ridgway called the meeting to order at 6:00pm

PRESIDENT'S REPORT (KATE RIDGWAY)

Kate suggested that board meetings should permanently be virtual to ease travel requirements and increase attendance, the board was in agreement with this. Board meetings will be held every other month beginning in August, membership meetings will be held during opposite months. Kate reported a poll will be sent out to determine a virtual meeting time. Revision of the bylaws was discussed with the goal of allowing for more flexibility. Tina will look in this, suggesting that more general terminology may be used to specify things like meeting scheduling and permitting the use of virtual tools for membership activities like voting and meeting.

TREASURER'S REPORT (KERI RAGLAND)

Keri reported the budget as it stands for this year, only \$25 has been spent for web management so far. Due to restrictions for meetings because of Covid-19, Keri reported there are extra funds available that could be allocated for other purposes. Suggestions for using extra funds included booking a more expensive speaker to encourage members to renew membership. The programs committee suggested purchasing a Zoom premium membership to support virtual meetings. Keri approved using the refreshment budget to fund this. Keri requested that board members email the board if they believe their funding needs have changed.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT (TINA GESSLER)

Tina reported nominations were a challenge this year. The refreshment committee and web manager positions are vacant. Tina compiled the VCA archives for the Museum of History and Culture, Chelsea will print and send them.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Programs Committee (Laurie King and Caroline Shaver)

The committee presented suggestions for virtual programming including virtual happy hours, tips presentations, virtual trivia, a mini mistakes session, and pre-recorded lab virtual tours. All suggestions were liked by the board.

Education Committee (Ariel Clark, Stacey Rush)

No committee members were present to report.

Membership Committee (Elizabeth Robson)

Elizabeth is working on ensuring all board members have access to VCA email accounts and reported that membership renewal emails will be sent out in the near future.

Publications Committee (Jackie Peterson-Grace)

Jackie reported that she will make a schedule for the newsletter. The newsletter will be sent to membership during the first week of every other month, starting in September and running through May. Jackie will provide reminders to the board about submission deadlines. She inquired about the VCA Scholarship, the board decided it was appropriate to advertise the scholarship in the newsletter.

Outreach Committee (Chelsea Blake)

Chelsea reported organizing a Helping Hands event at Evergreen Cemetery to take place at the end of September. A sign-up sheet will be sent out, participation will be limited to 15 people at a time. Greater interest may necessitate sending people to different cemeteries or scheduling multiple days. Activities will include things like stone cleaning and vegetation removal, and lunches may be provided.

Meeting adjourned by President Kate Ridgway at 7:15pm



2020 – 2021 BOARD MEMBERS

Kate Ridgway president.vaconservation@gmail.com	President
Tina Gessler vp.vaconservation@gmail.com	Vice President
Christy Atland secretary.vaconservation@gmail.com	Secretary
Keri Ragland Spangler treasurer.vaconservation@gmail.com	Treasurer
Stacy Rusch education.vaconservation@gmail.com	Education Co-Chair
Ariel Clark education.vaconservation@gmail.com	Education Co-Chair
Elizabeth Robson membership@virginiaconservationassociation.org	Membership Chair
Chelsea Blake outreach.vaconservation@gmail.com	Outreach Chair
Laurie King programs.vaconservation@gmail.com	Programs Co-Chair
Caroline Shaver programs.vaconservation@gmail.com	Programs Co-Chair
Jackie Peterson-Grace publications.vaconservation@gmail.com	Publications Chair
Lorraine Brevig webmanager.vaconservation@gmail.com	Web Management
Vacant	Refreshments Co-Chair
Vacant	Refreshments Co-Chair

VCA Student Scholarship

VCA offers two annual scholarships of \$250 each to be used for furthering education in the field. Use of funds may include conference or class fees or other professional-development expenses. Applicants must be VCA student members to apply. Applications are accepted throughout the year and will be evaluated during the April and December Board meetings.

To apply, submit a one-page proposal for use of funds that specifies how the scholarship will assist in the pursuit of a career in conservation or a directly related field. To apply, email our Education Committee Co-Chairs or mail paper applications to the VCA, P.O. Box 7023, Richmond, VA 23221

Contact Us

Virginia Conservation Association

P.O. Box 7032
Richmond, VA 23221

info@virginiaconservationassociation.org

www.virginiaconservationassociation.org
www.facebook.com/VaConservation/

Contribute to the Newsletter!

Are you working on an interesting or challenging treatment? Have you made exciting research discoveries, come across valuable resources, or attended an inspiring professional development event? We want to hear from you!

Our all-volunteer publishing team regularly calls for content and any VCA member is welcome to contribute. If you are interested in writing for the newsletter but would like some advice and guidance, please get in touch with our Publications Chair to discuss your ideas.

The deadline for the November Newsletter is **October 21**

The Virginia Conservation Association

Membership Application & Dues Payment

***Required**

*Date: _____, 20_____

* _____ New * _____ Renewing

*(Name as you would like for it to appear in the Directory-Please indicate if you do **not** want to be included in the Directory)*

*First _____ *Last _____

*Address: _____ *City _____

*State _____ *ZIP _____ *Telephone: (_____) _____

*Email: _____ Title: _____

Organization(s): _____ Website: _____

I Identify As:

_____ Administrator	_____ Conservator	_____ Librarian
_____ Appraiser	_____ Conservation Technician	_____ Post Graduate-Intern/Fellow
_____ Collector	_____ Curator	_____ Supporter
_____ Collection Mgr./Registrar	_____ Framer/Preparator	_____ Student
_____ Other (Specify) _____		

Areas of Conservation Expertise:

_____ Objects	_____ Furniture	_____ Paintings
_____ Ethnographic Objects	_____ Frames/Gilded Objects	_____ Painted Surfaces
_____ Archaeological Objects	_____ Textiles	_____ Conservation Science
_____ Architecture	_____ Books and Paper	_____ Preventive Conservation
_____ Sculpture	_____ Photographic Materials	_____ Accept Private Contracts
_____ Other (Specify) _____		

Are you willing to be a Disaster Response Volunteer in the event of an emergency? _____

Are you willing to serve as a Mentor? _____ Would you like to have a Mentor? _____

Are you interested in serving on the VCA board in the future? (see website for details) _____

Practicing Conservator/Consultant Conservators Only:

Would you like your contact information included in our website's VCA Services Directory? _____

The Virginia Conservation Association is open to all interested individuals. To become a member, complete this form and return it with your check made payable to VCA for \$30 (Regular) or \$15 (Student: Enclose a copy of a valid student ID) to the address below. To join online, visit www.virginiaconservationassociation.org/wp/.

Application and dues payment must be received by **October 15th** to ensure inclusion in the VCA Directory.

The Virginia Conservation Association
P. O. Box 7023
Richmond, Virginia 23221